

April 29, 2018

5th Week of Easter

1 John 4:7-21

In this passage, John helps us understand more about love and what it means for those who claim to know God. Twice John clearly states “God is love” (vs. 8, 16). Love is not simply a characteristic attribute of God, nor is love merely a part of God’s nature. John instead claims love is the very essence of God. So God is not simply loving, God IS love. Love is Who God is. To be in relationship with God—Whose very nature is love has powerful implications for we who follow Him (J. Sunberg, 2018).

Standing at the foot of the Cross, gazing on the length to which God’s love has gone for us, it’s impossible (unless we are particularly hard-hearted; unless he says, we simply haven’t known God at all) not to sense the power and possibilities within that love. This is the force that has changed the world, and could still change the world if the followers of Jesus would really come on board with it (N.T. Wright, 2011).

How do we dream the world might be changed for the better?

What change in us would invite that transformation to begin?

What is the Lord teaching you of love, that is changing your heart?

Upon whom will you focus your heart in prayer this week?

What secret act of love will bless a sister or brother this week?

Ask the Lord to identify anything in your heart causing you to fear, and consciously give it to Him, that you will be free to love.

Next week: *1 John 5:1-6*

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SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THIS WEEK:

Today: *Psalm 136* (What is God saying to you?)

Monday: *Galatians 5:13-24*

Tuesday: *Romans 5:1-11*

Wednesday: *Ephesians 5:1-20*

Thursday: *Hebrews 13:1-6*

Friday: *Deuteronomy 7:6-16*

Saturday: *1 Corinthians 13:1-13*

Father, as we open ourselves to You, we confess places falling short of love. Forgive us for preferring attitudes/actions of envy & retribution over loving one another. We invite Your Spirit into the center of our beings to fill us with Your love & dispel any reaction or motivation that falls short of love. Help us love You by loving others, even in difficult & non-reciprocating relationships. May Your love overflow abundantly to those with whom You bring us into contact. For Your glory. Amen.

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